

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 3, 2012

Senate Resolution

No. 29

Introduced by Senator Blakeslee

March 27, 2012

Senate Resolution No. 29—Relative to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

1 WHEREAS, The largest population of Iranians living outside
2 the Islamic Republic of Iran live in the United States, which is
3 home to as many as 1.5 million Iranian Americans, with the largest
4 concentration—about 700,000—living in Los Angeles; and

5 WHEREAS, The Iranian American community has a rich
6 tradition of excellence in academia and the sciences and has
7 produced luminaries in many fields, including, but not limited to,
8 the arts, medicine, engineering, technology, and business; and

9 WHEREAS, Iranian Americans are active philanthropists and
10 leaders in their local communities, providing invaluable
11 contributions to the ~~state~~ *state's* and the nation's diverse cultural
12 fabric; and

13 WHEREAS, Six out of 10 Iranian Americans have immediate
14 family living in the Islamic Republic of Iran and nearly seven out
15 of 10 speak at least several times a month with their friends and
16 family members who live there; and

17 WHEREAS, Iranian Americans have compassion and empathy
18 for their friends and family living in the Islamic Republic of Iran
19 who do not enjoy the same opportunities to prosper because that
20 government infringes on the civil, cultural, economic, political,
21 and social freedoms of its citizens, and commits serious human
22 rights violations; and

23 WHEREAS, The Islamic Republic of Iran is a member state to
24 the United Nations with a charter that obligates all its member

1 states to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human
2 rights and freedoms; and

3 WHEREAS, The Islamic Republic of Iran ratified the
4 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which
5 recognizes that the equal and inalienable rights of all members of
6 the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace
7 in the world; and

8 WHEREAS, On March 14, 1984, the United Nations
9 Commission on Human Rights first published a Resolution on the
10 Situation of Human Rights in Iran, expressing its deep concern at
11 the continuing serious violations of human rights and fundamental
12 freedoms of the Islamic Republic of Iran; and

13 WHEREAS, On December 19, 2011, the United Nations adopted
14 a resolution expressing its deep concern at serious ongoing human
15 rights violations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including, but not
16 limited to, all of the following:

17 (a) Pervasive gender inequality and violence against women,
18 including sexual violence, a continued persecution of women's
19 human rights defenders, arrests, violent repression, and sentencing
20 of women exercising their right to peaceful assembly and increased
21 discrimination against women and girls in law and in practice.

22 (b) Continuing discrimination and other human rights violations,
23 at times amounting to persecution, against persons belonging to
24 ethnic, linguistic, or other minorities, including, but not limited
25 to, Arabs, Azeris, Baluchis, and Kurds, and their defenders.

26 (c) Increased persecution and human rights violations against
27 persons belonging to recognized religious minorities, including,
28 but not limited to, Christians, Jews, Sufis, Sunni Muslims, and
29 Zoroastrians, and their defenders.

30 (d) Increased persecution and human rights violations against
31 persons belonging to unrecognized religious minorities, particularly
32 members of the Baha'i faith, and their defenders, including
33 escalating attacks on Baha'is; and

34 WHEREAS, *The Special Rapporteur appointed by the United*
35 *Nations Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights*
36 *in Iran presented his latest report to the United Nations on March*
37 *12, 2012, and his report, based on over 100 eyewitness and*
38 *firsthand testimonies, demonstrated "a striking pattern of violations*
39 *of fundamental human rights guaranteed under international law";*
40 *and*

1 WHEREAS, The tragic death of Nedā Āghā-Soltān became
2 iconic of the dozens of innocent Iranians who were killed, *hundreds*
3 *who were injured*, and the more than 4,000 Iranians who were
4 arbitrarily arrested during the June 2009 election protests, as well
5 as the greater struggle of Iranians to secure their human rights and
6 political freedoms; and

7 WHEREAS, The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran
8 continues a systematic campaign to restrict the freedom of peaceful
9 assembly and the freedom of opinion and expression through
10 repression, intimidation, and detainment of political opponents,
11 human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists, Internet providers,
12 Internet users, clerics, artists, filmmakers, academics, students,
13 and labor leaders; and

14 WHEREAS, The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran
15 is engaged in a comprehensive censorship effort to restrict access
16 to the Internet, as well as mobile voice and data communications;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran
19 deliberately interferes with international satellite broadcasts,
20 including those of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Radio Farda,
21 Voice of America's Persian News Network, and the British
22 Broadcasting Corporation, to control the flow of information in
23 and out of the country; and

24 WHEREAS, On February 17, 2012, the International
25 Telecommunication Union (ITU), a United Nations specialized
26 agency, built upon their existing regulations prohibiting the
27 jamming of satellites and approved a change in regulations
28 directing nations to take all necessary actions to stop deliberate
29 interference with satellite transmission within their jurisdictions;
30 and

31 WHEREAS, The jamming of satellites by the government of
32 the Islamic Republic of Iran is a clear violation of ITU regulations,
33 as well as Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
34 which proclaims "[E]veryone has the right to freedom of opinion
35 and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions
36 without interference and to seek, receive and impart information
37 and ideas through any media and regardless of frontier"; ~~now,~~
38 ~~therefore, be it and~~

39 WHEREAS, *An expanded and sustained diplomatic effort with*
40 *the Islamic Republic of Iran that elevates the importance of human*

1 *rights is key to peacefully resolving the conflict with that country*
2 *and providing opportunities for Iranian democracy and human*
3 *rights defenders; and*

4 *WHEREAS, In 1963, during a speech delivered at American*
5 *University, President John F. Kennedy argued for diplomatic*
6 *solutions to foreign policy disputes by stating, “So let us not be*
7 *blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our*
8 *common interests and the means by which those differences can*
9 *be resolved”; and*

10 *WHEREAS, President Ronald Reagan emphasized the value of*
11 *diplomatic solutions to deescalating international tensions, stating*
12 *in a speech delivered on January 4, 1984, that, “we’re determined*
13 *to deal with our differences peacefully through negotiations. We’re*
14 *prepared to discuss the problems that divide us and to work for*
15 *practical, fair solutions on the basis of mutual compromise”; now,*
16 *therefore, be it*

17 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate*
18 *recognizes the numerous contributions of the Iranian American*
19 *community to California’s social, cultural, and economic character;*
20 *and be it further*

21 *Resolved, That the Senate urges the government of the Islamic*
22 *Republic of Iran to ease travel restrictions on Iranian Americans*
23 *seeking to visit their friends and families living in that country;*
24 *and be it further*

25 *Resolved, That the Senate stands in solidarity with Iranian*
26 *Americans in calling upon the government of the Islamic Republic*
27 *of Iran to respect and ensure to all individuals within its*
28 *territory—regardless of gender, ethnicity, or religion—the civil,*
29 *cultural, economic, political, and social rights as recognized in the*
30 *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and be it*
31 *further*

32 *Resolved, That the Senate strongly urges the government of the*
33 *Islamic Republic of Iran to effectively implement all of the human*
34 *rights treaties to which it is already a party; and be it further*

35 *Resolved, That the Senate strongly urges the government of the*
36 *Islamic Republic of Iran to uphold the freedom of assembly,*
37 *freedom of expression, and freedom of press and to end the*
38 *repression, intimidation, persecution, and unlawful detainment of,*
39 *among others, political opponents, human rights defenders,*
40 *lawyers, journalists, Internet providers, Internet users, clerics,*

1 artists, filmmakers, academics, students, and labor leaders; and be
2 it further

3 *Resolved*, That the Senate urges the government of the Islamic
4 Republic of Iran to immediately cease the practice of censorship
5 and fully comply with their legal obligations under the Radio
6 Regulations of the International Telecommunication Union,
7 including the cessation of harmful interference of satellite
8 broadcasts; and be it further

9 *Resolved*, That the Senate recognizes the month of June 2012
10 as 30 Days of Solidarity with the Human Rights Movement in the
11 Islamic Republic of Iran; and be it further

12 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
13 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.